

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
30 June 2005 (30.06.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/058589 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **B30B 15/06**,
B29C 51/26, 51/36, 51/18, 51/10

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/AU2004/001731

(22) International Filing Date: 8 December 2004 (08.12.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
2003907074 19 December 2003 (19.12.2003) AU

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM,
ZW.

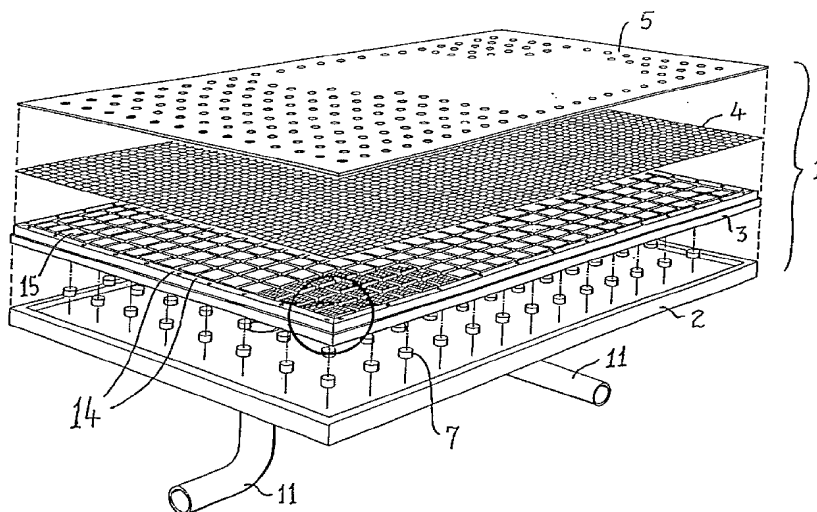
(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,
ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI,
FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO,
SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN,
GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— with international search report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guid-
ance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the begin-
ning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: PLATEN FOR USE IN PRODUCT ENCAPSULATION



(57) Abstract: A platen (1) which can be quickly evacuated and used in product encapsulation and like processes is provided where the platen (1) is configured to be gaseously evacuated. The platen (1) comprises a base plate (2), at least one gas evacuation conduit (11) configured to communicate through the base plate (2), and a support plate (3) spaced apart from the base plate (2) to create a plenum chamber (9) between the base plate (2) and the support plate (3) where each gas evacuation conduit (11) is in communication with the plenum chamber (9). The platen (1) further comprises a first array of channels (14) formed in the surface of the support plate (3) remote from the plenum chamber (9) wherein a plurality of mesas (15) are defined in those areas of the support plate surface intermediate the channels and a plurality of apertures (19) located in the channels (14) and each passing through the support plate (3), the apertures (19) extending between the support plate (3) and the plenum chamber (9).



WO 2005/058589 A1